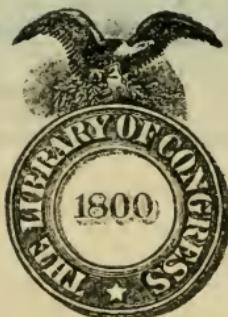


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THE

HISTORY OF ACTON, ME.

BY JOSEPH FULLONTON.

"This shall be written for the generation to come." Psalm 102:18.

DOVER:

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INTRODUCTION.

THE dearest of all places on earth is the home of our childhood and youth, where the sunny portion of life was passed. Then, for a time at least, the heart was unvisited by the thoughts of sin, the brow was untouched by the breath of care, and innocent joys were realized. The mention of *home* to the absent thrills a chord in the bosom, sending in quicker pulsations the blood through the heart. To furnish the citizens of this community with a connected history of the place of their residence, where the more part of them commenced the journey of life, or have spent the most of their days, is the object of this work. It is unpretending as to its literary character, and pecuniary benefit is no part of the design in offering it to the public, as its sale must be limited, and cannot be expected to more than meet the expense of publishing. Errors will be detected without doubt, as very many particulars that are given, have been obtained from the testimony of individuals, from their own recollection. Many have manifested an interest in the effort, and have given all the information in their power. Pleasure is taken in naming among these, Dr. R. Buck, J. Bodwell, Esq., and Mr. Ralph Farnham, a gentleman now 90 years of age, who has been a resident of the town 67 years, and is a living chronicle of the events of the past. Besides the civil and ecclesiastical records, Williamson's History of Maine, Greenleaf's Sketches, and Millet's History of the Baptists in the state, have been consulted to advantage. If those who read shall be instructed in the legends of former times, be interested, profited, their love for the good institutions of their place and country be increased, as also a regard for History, that important part of knowledge, the Author will feel compensated for the amount of labor bestowed upon it.

EXPLANATORY REMARKS.

The state of Maine was a part of Massachusetts for about 130 years, ending in 1820, when what was called the District of Maine was disannexed, and constituted an independent State. Acton also was the westerly division of the town of Shapleigh until 1830, when it was set off and incorporated by its present name. These remarks will help the reader clearly to understand many statements relative to attempts to divide the state and town found in the Civil History.

GEOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION.

Acton is situated in Latitude $43^{\circ} 30'$ N. and nearly 6° E. Longitude. It is 108 miles N. N. E. from Boston, and 105 from Augusta. It is bounded N. by Little Ossipee river, which separates it from Newfield, E. by Shapleigh, S. by Sanford and Lebanon, and W. by Salmon Fall river, which separates it from Milton and Wakefield, N. H.

The principal rivers are those named in the boundaries with the addition of Mousam towards the N. E. There are several ponds, as Long, Square, Great East, Garvin's and Lone ponds. The soil is mostly hard to cultivate, but pretty good crops are usually obtained. The surface of the town is much diversified with hills and valleys, except a portion in the E. and N. Easterly parts. The best farms are on the ridges, and there being many of these, they are now known by the names of some who first settled them, or by those of some of the prominent persons who have resided on them. Toward the S. there are Fox's, Hilton's, Brackett's, and Cook's Ridges. A little S. E. of the Corner is Hubbard's Ridge. Young's is towards the N. W., and another called Fox's in the N. On the W. side is a place with the local name of "The Hopper" from its shape, being surrounded in almost every part by high hills, from three points of which roads (if so they may be called,) lead into it, which are so steep that travelers apprehend they shall be *ground up* when they get to the bottom. From Cook's Ridge, one of the most commanding elevations in the town, the prospect is grand. Towards the West, South West, and South, the eye extends over quite a portion of Strafford County, in N.

H., and the southerly portion of York County in Me. Farther East the ocean off Wells Beach, some 25 miles distant, whitened with the sails of vessels, is distinctly seen. A contemplative, devout mind there has noble conceptions of Him "who made the heavens, and the earth, and the fountains of waters."

FIRST SETTLEMENTS.

MAINE DISCOVERED AND GRANTED.

Maine was discovered in 1603, by Martin Pring and Wm. Browne, who came in two vessels from England. It was granted by King James I. in 1606 to the Plymouth Company, and by this Company transferred to Mason and Gorges in 1624. The grant included quite a portion of N. H. In 1629, Mason and Gorges divided, the latter taking the country E. of the Piscataqua river, which King Charles I. named Maine, from a place of that name in France, of which his queen, Henrietta Maria, was proprietor.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS.

The first permanent settlements in the State were commenced at York in 1630. It was chartered a city in 1642, by the name of Georgeanna. It was afterwards incorporated as a town.

From 1630 to 1713, a period of 83 years, the settlements increased so slowly in consequence of the Indian wars, &c., that *but eight towns were incorporated*. These were from Kittery, along on the coast, easterly. In 1720, from Quampegan Falls in Berwick, there was not a house back north, nearer than Canada.

But after 1730, efforts were made to extend the settlements farther back. Sanford, called at first Phillipstown, including Alfred, was laid out in 1734, and settled in 1740. Lebanon, the Indian name of which was Towwoh, was surveyed in 1733, and settled about 10 years after. This was incorporated in 1767, and Sanford in 1768. These towns soon had quite a population.

SHAPLEIGH SETTLED AND CHARTERED.

The territory in this part of the State was of course at first claimed by the Indians. As early as 1661, one Francis Small purchased of Capt. Sunday, an Indian Sagamore, the tract now composing the towns of Shapleigh, Acton, Newfield, Parsonsfield, a part of Limerick, and Cornish, and the most of Limington. Small afterwards conveyed an undivided portion of this to Nicholas Shapleigh, Esq. of Kittry. Mr. Small died at Cape Cod, and August 5, 1771, a division of the land was effected, when what is Parsonsfield, Shapleigh, Acton, and a part of Limerick, became the acknowledged property of Shapleigh, or the claimants under him. Soon after this, the town was surveyed.

And now the time had come when this 'wilderness' and almost 'solitary place' was to be made glad. Hitherto an unbroken forest was spread over the hills and through the vales. In this the moose, the deer, bears, foxes, and other wild animals roved at pleasure, with none to dispute their right, save occasionally when a few Indians wandered this way for the purpose of hunting in the woods, fishing in the waters, and catching the beaver, sable, &c. for their furs. Here now the woodman's axe was to be heard, the mighty forest trees were to be leveled, the rude cottages to be erected, the ground to be cultivated, and civilized beings have possession, who should gain their subsistence by honest industry in lawful avocations, plant and sustain the institutions of knowledge, morality, and religion, and thus be prepared to enjoy good in this life, and by the assistance and blessing of Heaven on right conduct, unsullied bliss in the immortal state.

It is said that the first settler in town was Joseph Jellison, who came with his son also named Joseph, and settled at what is now called Emery's Mills in Shapleigh, in 1775. A saw-mill had been erected there probably a little before, by Simeon Emery of Berwick, who was extensively engaged in the lumber trade. This Emery afterwards moved there with his sons, one of which was the present Jeremiah Emery, Esq. The first settlements in the part now constituting Acton, were commenced in the Autumn of 1776. Three men named Benj. Kimens, Clement Steel, and John York, with their families, moved into the neighborhood now called "The Corner." Just about that time John Burnham Hanson, of Dover, a landholder, cut out a road for the proprietors through the whole length of the town, beginning at Lebanon

line, near where the widow Reynolds now lives, thence back by "the Corner," to Ossipee river. Some twelve or fifteen hands were employed in this work a considerable part of two weeks. From the above date the settlers came in rapidly. In the absence of all records, and the lack of any oral testimony that would be full or correct, no extended account of those who came early can be given. A few however will be mentioned. Joshua Brackett came in 1778, and settled on the place now the Parsonage of the Baptist Society. John Hussey settled not far from the time near where his son John now resides. Gershom Ricker from Dover, in 1779, settled back of where his son Paul now lives. In Feb. of the same year, Paul Farnham, with his sons Dummer, Ralph, and Paul, came from Lebanon, and commenced near where one of the above sons, Mr. Ralph Farnham, now resides. In March, John Woodman from Farmington, N. H. moved to a spot near where Moses Paul lives. Daniel Heard also came the same year, and Benj. Drew not far from the time. Mr. Drew's wife, it is said, was the first woman that rode into town by the means of a horse, and this was on horseback.

Several of the early settlers were named Hubbard, and the plantation was called Hubbardstown. The land cost many at that time but about two dollars per acre. It produced good crops of corn, and some other productions as soon as cleared, but for some time many privations were endured. The war was going on in which the Colonies were struggling for freedom, and money was scarce. A grist-mill was built at the place now called Emery's Mills in 1779. Before that many miles were traveled to get corn and grain ground, save a few who had it ground in a mill that was turned by hand, similar to those used by the Jews in old times. This was Mr. Woodman's on Fox Ridge.

The population increased fast after the war closed in 1783, so that in ten years from the time the first settlements began, the number of rateable polls was over 150. An act of incorporation was requested, which was granted March 5, 1785, and the town named Shapleigh, in honor of Nicholas Shapleigh, Esq., a principal proprietor. The charter was signed by Samuel A. Otis, Speaker of the House of Representatives, Samuel Adams, President of the Senate, and Thomas Cushing, at that time acting Governor, in consequence of the indisposition of Gov. Hancock.

CIVIL HISTORY.

1785. The District of Maine, at the time this town was chartered, contained about 75,000 inhabitants. The population was however fast increasing, and the arts and sciences were being brought into a commendable state of perfection for a new country. The first town meeting under the act of incorporation was held May 3. It was voted to give 28 dollars to a collector and constable, who should serve on the west side of the pond, (now Acton,) and Josiah Magoon was chosen to these offices. Six Tithingmen were chosen, and this or a greater number was chosen for a long series of years afterwards. In October there was a great freshet which did much damage.

1786. The municipal affairs were very well managed, although not a great interest was felt in attending the town meetings. New settlers were coming in, and the inhabitants were industriously employed in converting what was but little before a wilderness into fruitful fields.

1787. Five hundred dollars were raised for highways. It was voted that the Selectmen receive four shillings per day for their services. At this time there were three counties in the District, viz., York, Cumberland, and Lincoln, and several conventions were held to adopt measures to have them separated from Mass. and formed into a State. Early this year this town voted against the separation. But in about a month after, the vote was taken again and passed in favor. But the Legislature was opposed, and by passing several acts favoring the District with better privileges, the excitement about separation went down.

1788. In January a Convention of delegates equal to the number of Representatives, was held in Boston, to act on the Constitution of the United States, which was submitted for ratification or rejection. Jeremiah Emery was the delegate from this town. The Convention gave a majority of 19 votes in its favor. In April this town voted for governor for the first time. But 16 votes were cast, 9 for Elbridge Gerry, and 7 for John Hancock. May 12, Jeremiah Emery was chosen the first Representative of the town.

1789. Money was rather scarce, but lumber plenty, and at the annual meeting, March 30, it was voted that the Selectmen should take orders for lumber or produce for their services the ensuing year. April 30, G. Washington was inaugurated President of the U. S. and prosperity and hap-

piness began to be realized. Sept. 14, it was voted to divide the town into two Parishes. This division was nearly as the towns of Acton and Shapleigh are now divided.

1790. May 17, voted not to send a Representative to the General Court.

1791. There was considerable interest this year in the W. part of the town about having a meeting house erected. After much discussion it was proposed to see if the town would build two. The question was taken Sept. 26, and passed in the negative.

1792. May 17, a vote was taken on a separation of the District from Mass. For it, none; against it, 46.

1793. April 1, voted that the town Treasurer have 4d. on a pound of the money entrusted to his care as a commission for his services. Oct. 8, John Hancock, the popular governor of the State, died at the age of 55. He was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and had been governor about 10 years.

1794. April 17, voted that the Treasurer have a commission of 5d. per pound. Ham Nason gave 8 shillings for the office of Constable. The first meeting house erected was so far completed that town meeting was held in it Sept. 22. Bowdoin College was chartered this year.

1795. April 6, H. Nason took the constable's office in the W. Parish, he to give 41 shillings for it.

1796. There was a great political excitement in the State, but it was not much felt in this town. There were two parties and two candidates for governor. Only 52 votes were cast here, all for Samuel Adams, who was chosen.

1797. April 3.—The office of constable was now much desired. Dr. C. Powers bid it off in the W. Parish for one dollar. He also took it in the East Parish, giving 50 cents, which was paid in town meeting. The attention of the citizens was now turned to an evil that threatened to diminish the income of the land in the town. The first transgression had caused the Creator to curse the ground, making it bring forth "thorns and thistles." This last article came forth in great abundance here. It was judged important to exterminate it, if possible. It was therefore voted, that during the three ensuing years, all the thistles that could be found in town be killed,—and that every man kill them in and against his own land; and if any one fail to do it, he pay a fine of two pounds. A separation of the District of Me. from Mass. was agitated. One voted for it, and 62 against it in this place.

1798. Annual meeting April 2, Joseph Dore, 3d. agreed to give two dollars for the constable's office.

1799. In the spring, Gov. Increase Sumner was elected Chief Magistrate for the third time, but he died June 7. Mr. Gill, the Lt. Governor, filled the chair the most of the political year, when he also died.

1800. Early this year there was a warm political discussion. C. Strong and E. Gerry were candidates for governor. In this town the first had 71 votes, and the last 3. Mr. S. was chosen by a small majority.

1801. The town meetings had hitherto been held in the W. Parish; but a vote was passed the previous year that they be held one third of the time in the E. Parish after that. Accordingly April 6, it was held at John H. Bartlett's. The annual business was transacted in much harmony.

1802. Stephen Marsh had 25 dollars for serving as Constable this year. Probably the constables collected the taxes likewise, although the Records do not specify. The town had chosen no representative for 14 years. Perhaps one great reason was, the law then made it necessary for the towns to pay their own Representatives. May 15, it was agreed to send one, and John Leighton was chosen, he having, as it appears, 10 votes, the whole number cast.

1803. The school tax was increased to 500 dollars. Before it was generally about 200 for several years.

1804. Sept. 25—Town meeting at Jacob Emery's. Voted that the town furnish 64 pounds of powder, 100 balls, 100 flints, and 3 tin or iron camp kettles, for every 64 men enrolled in the militia in the town. Voted to raise 300 dollars for the expense of the above, and the erection of guide boards where necessary.

1805. A majority was against sending a Representative to the General Court.

1806. The House of Representatives of the State consisted of 418 members, of which 115 were from Maine. This town sent two.

1807. The matter of having the District separated from Mass. was waked up again this year,—but it found little favor here, only 3 voting for it, and 107 in opposition. Voted to hold the town meetings one half of the time in the Second Parish hereafter.

1808. Sept. 9, chose A. Rogers, Thomas Drew, and Jonathan Young, a Committee to petition the President of the U. S. to suspend the several acts of Congress laying an Em-

bargo, or that he will call a meeting of Congress for that purpose. A petition in very earnest and respectful language was drawn up and forwarded. Congress soon after passed an act to suspend the Embargo in relation to either power that would relax its severity towards this nation, and then again afterwards so far repealed the Embargo act as to give our merchant vessels permission to depart to all countries except Great Britain and France. Dec. 10, James Sullivan, governor of the State, died. He was in the second year of the office. John Leighton's bill for serving as Selectman this year was \$31,50 cents. Moses Jellison's 13 dollars.

1809. April 3, Asa Merrill took the constable's office for 40 dollars. Voted that the town Treasurer receive one per cent. July 29, Voted to authorize the Selectmen to furnish guns, bayonets, and equipments to those that belong to trainbands in this town, that are not able to purchase them.

1810. The annual meeting was held April 2, and continued afterward by adjournment. It was voted that the Treasurer have two per cent of the money entrusted to his care, for his services. It was also voted that 12 1-2 cents be paid for each crow's head that should be carried to the Selectmen.

1811. At the annual meeting, April 1, Edmund Coffin bid off the collectorship for the whole town for \$58,50. It was voted to pay 12 1-2 cents for each crow's head. Sept. 16, voted to pay Zebulon and Dudley Gilman 144 dollars for rebuilding one half of the bridge over Salmon Fall river, near Watson's Mills, now Milton Mills in N. H., they being the lowest bidders. In Nov. voted to pay Zebulon Cook 348 dollars to rebuild the bridge over Mousam pond, on the road leading by Esq. Emery's.

1812. This year the votes for Governor were 256. Of these 172 were for Elbridge Gerry, and 84 for Caleb Strong, the successful candidate. The use of the school lot was bid off by Samuel Goodwin at \$8,55 cents, he not to strip or waste it.

1813. On a question submitted to the voters in the County to have fire proof buildings for County Records built at Alfred, 275 were given here, all in favor of the measure. May 1, it was voted that neat cattle may run at large without a keeper, but that horses should not. Aug. 5, voted that the Selectmen obtain 100 pounds of powder for a town stock.

1814. April 4, voted again on having fire proof buildings for County Records, as follows. In favor of having them at

Alfred, 320. At York 1, and at Shapleigh 1. For Governor, Sam'l Dexter, 197; for C. Strong, who was elected, 105. This year the war with England was going on; Portsmouth, in N. H., and the vicinity in Maine, were in danger of an invasion by a British Fleet. The Militia were called out to defend them. Oct. 6, this town voted that the Selectmen provide arms and equipments for certain soldiers that were not able to obtain them. Several were detached to go to Kittery, and it was voted to furnish them three days' rations, to commence on the morning of the next day, or in lieu thereof, to pay them 50 cents for each ration.

1815. By a previous vote, the annual meeting was held in March instead of April. Benj. Webber was chosen collector for the whole town at his bid, \$55,75 cents. The W. Parish school lot was leased six years to Samuel Sanborn, at \$3,26 cents yearly. June 17, voted that horses should not go at large in the limits of the town. A house for keeping the town stock, powder, balls, &c., was erected this year at Emery's Mills, for which William Webber was paid \$89,70 cents.

1816. January 16, the Selectmen were chosen a Committee to petition the Legislature of Mass. to adopt some measures which will most promptly secure to the inhabitants of the District of Maine the establishment of a separate and independent State. March 11, Edmund Coffin was chosen collector of the town at his bid, 56 dollars. This year John Brooks was chosen Gov. of Massachusetts. In this town 91 votes were given for him, and 186 for S. Dexter. May 20, the following question was submitted to the voters: Shall the Legislature of Mass. be requested to give its consent to the separation of the District of Maine from Mass. proper, and to the erection of said District into a separate State? The vote here was for the separation, 59—against it, 42.

1817. March 10, A. Hubbard took the collector's office in the West Parish, for 27 dollars. It was voted to raise 2000 dollars for roads and bridges; and in July an additional sum of \$1000 was voted.

1818. A. Hubbard was collector for the West Parish, he bidding it off for 28 dollars. The summer season of this year was very fine, which being contrasted with the two previous years, rendered it verys joyful to farmers.

1819. It was voted at the annual meeting that horses should not go at large from the 20th of May to the 20th of November. In the early part of this year the subject of having the District of Maine separated from Mass. was dis-

cussed with great warmth. When the Legislature convened at Boston in May, petitions for a separation were presented from about 70 towns, and although there was much opposition, a Bill in favor of the applicants became a law June 19. The yeas and nays of the legal voters of the several towns were taken July 26, on the question of the expediency of Maine being a State on the condition set forth in the Act relating to the matter. In this town, 100 were in favor, and 135 against it. In the towns at large, however, 9,959 were in favor, and 7,132 opposed. A Convention was next called, to meet in Portland the 2d Monday in October, to form a Constitution. The Delegates chosen by this town were John Bodwell, J. Leighton, and Samuel Heard. This Convention submitted a Constitution, on which the sense of the voters was taken, Dec. 6. In this town but 25 were in favor of it, and 132 against it. It was ratified however by a large majority of the popular votes.

1820. In March, the Act for the admission of Maine into the Union was approved by President Monroe. William King was chosen Governor. In this town 193 votes were cast, all for him. E. Coffin was chosen collector for the whole town for 63 dollars. The sum voted for the repair of highways and bridges was 3800 dollars. Some now began to agitate the subject of dividing the town. May 29, it was voted to instruct the Representative to oppose a petition of that kind in the Legislature, if such an one should be presented.

1821. A. K. Paris was this year chosen Governor. Here he received 95 votes, and all others 133. At the same meeting, Sept. 10, four ballottings for a Representative were had without effecting a choice. The prominent candidates were Enoch Wood, A. Hubbard, J. Trafton, and W. Mann. Mr. Wood obtained the most votes. At two of the ballottings he wanted but 11 of an election, and at one he lacked but 3. At 9 o'clock in the evening the meeting was adjourned to the 17th. At that time Mr. Wood was chosen.

1822. It was voted that the Treasurer have 1-2 per cent on the money entrusted to his charge. It was agreed to raise 3000 dollars for highways, &c., and in Sept. 1000 more were added. Gov. Paris had 193 votes for that office, all others, 29.

1823. Sept. 8, Gov. Paris had 179 votes, being the whole number cast but one.

1824. March 8, Luther Goding chosen collector of the town for 40 dollars. The highway tax raised was 5000,

1-4 of which was to be reserved for winter. Sept. 13, Gov. Paris received 189 votes, and there were two others. Two ballottings were had for a Representative, but no choice was made. The three principal candidates were John Bodwell, John Trafton, and Aaron Hubbard. The first time Mr. Bodwell lacked 36 of having a majority of all the votes, and the next time Mr. Trafton lacked 28. The meeting was then adjourned without day. On a question taken in the autumn of this year where the Judicial Courts and County offices should be located, more voted than on any subject at one time before the town was divided. The whole number was 395, of which 391 were in favor of Alfred, and two for Kennebunk. The Selectmen, Town Clerk and Treasurer, constituted a Board for several years to license Inn-keepers, retailers, &c., and some years 15, 20, or more, were licensed. The great temperance reform had not then commenced; but the awful evils of intemperance were felt, and in consequence of their effects on the freedom of the elections, the Board was instructed to prohibit those licensed from selling on town meeting days in the vicinity where the meetings were held, on the penalty of such retailers being disqualified to have licenses afterward. But this had little or no effect. The multitude drank inebriating liquors. They wanted them at town meetings as well as at other times. Some sold them, and when the matter was brought up at a subsequent meeting, it was voted to do nothing with them, but that they be licensed as if no such prohibitory instructions had been passed.

1825. The annual meeting was held in the East Parish, March 14. One of the articles in the Warrant was to see if the town should be divided, and to petition the Legislature to that effect. It was voted 170 to 126 to dispense with the article. In Sept. the matter was brought up again and disposed of in the same manner. And to put the subject to rest for a season, it was voted to instruct the Selectmen not to insert any article in the Warrant for dividing the town for five years from that time. Gov. Paris had 206 votes, and there was one besides.

1826. This year it was voted to raise 5000 dollars for repairing highways, two thirds of it to be reserved till winter. In September E. Lincoln was chosen Governor of the State; 281 votes were cast in this town, all for him.

1827. There began about this time to be considerable competition for the office of Collector. At the annual meeting, March 12, Samuel D. Brackett bid it off for nothing.

April 2, voted that the Selectmen sell the town stock of powder at public auction. In Sept. Gov. Lincoln received 279 votes, being the whole number cast.

1828. Annual meeting in the West Parish March 10. The Collectorship was now more desirable than before. It was bid not only down to nothing, but up to 40 dollars, and struck off to Luther Goding. He was to collect in the whole town. He served faithfully, giving the town the above sum. Indeed a better Collector the town never had. A few thought that the town should not take all, if any, of the forty dollars, but the more part were satisfied, and would have been glad to have had him serve again on the same conditions. The matter of dividing the town did not sleep five years, as many intended two or three years before, but now was waked up in earnest. Nature had suggested a division by a line of ponds running mostly through the central part. The subject was discussed, and at the annual meeting the question was taken by ballot as follows: Yeas 164, nays 111. A committee consisting of Dr. R. Buck, John Bodwell, E. Bodwell, Dr. Wm. Lewis, and J. C. Libby, was appointed to draft a petition to the Legislature in favor of the measure. Sept. 8, Gov. Lincoln had 361 votes, and there was one scattering. Nov. 3, it was voted to instruct the Representative to use all fair and honorable means to have the town divided.

1829. March 9, S. D. Brackett bid off the Collectorship in the West parish for nothing. L. Goding bid off the East parish, and was to receive \$6,50. 8000 dollars were raised for roads, 3000 of it to be reserved for winter. In Sept., for Gov., J. G. Hunton had 182, and S. E. Smith 180. Mr. H. was the successful candidate. Two efforts were made to elect a Representative. The candidates were—E. Wood, A. Hubbard, S. Stacy, and E. Bodwell. On the first balloting, Mr. Wood wanted 41 of an election, and on the second but 23. Mr. Hubbard fell behind him but three votes. It was then voted not to choose any. January 9, it was voted (202 to 165) that the contemplated division of the town be by the Parish line, and Elisha Bodwell was chosen an agent concerning the division. January 16, the Agent was instructed to petition the Legislature to divide the town by the Parish line with the exception of varying it so as to take two families and their estates into the eastern town.

1830. The Act incorporating Acton was passed March 6, of this year. The whole population at the time of the division was about 2950. By the line of division Shapleigh

had about 170 more inhabitants than Acton, but the valuation of the latter town was the greatest. There is a town in England named Acton, one in Mass. and one in Vermont. Samuel Heard called the first meeting under the charter, which was held March 22. Jethro Goodwin was chosen collector and constable, he agreeing to give 50 cents for the offices. John Garvin agreed to support the poor for 170 dollars. Sept. 13, the votes were for Mr. Hunton, for Gov. 120, and for Mr. Smith, 83.

1831. March 14, L. Goding bid off the collectorship, giving the town one dollar. Gilman Marsh bid off the support of the town paupers, with the exception of one person, at \$149 50 cents. Sept. 12, for Governor, Daniel Goodenow had 96 votes, and S. E. Smith, the successful candidate, 85. It was voted to build a pound. This was bid off by S. D. Brackett, at \$35 50 cents.

1832. At the annual meeting in March, Asa Brackett took the collector's office, he to give the town 52 cents for it. At the election in Sept. Mr. Smith had 127 votes for Gov. and Mr. Goodenow 105.

1833. This year A. Brackett was to receive \$3,95 cents for collecting the taxes. In Sept. R. P. Dunlap received 107 votes for Governor, and D. Goodenow 65.

1834. Urbane Grant agreed to collect the taxes for 25 cents. It was customary to choose the collector to serve as constable. This last was a source of some profit, and with the honor of the two offices, was the cause of the office of collector being bid so low. The question of the propriety of building a new jail at Alfred was submitted to the voters. The yeas were 122, nays none. The votes for governor in September were for Peleg Sprague, 109, and R. P. Dunlap, 106.

1835. The annual meeting was called March 9, at the front door of the Congregational meeting house, where it convened and chose a Moderator, and then voted to adjourn one minute to meet in the house. Asa Brackett took the collectorship at \$4,40 cents. Sept. 14, R. P. Dunlap had 100 votes for Governor, and Wm. King 96.

1836. The office of collector became more profitable, the town agreeing to pay A. Brackett \$13,70 cents. Some attention was given to the necessity of having some better provision made for the support of the poor than disposing of them to the lowest bidders in town meeting; but nothing very important was effected. This year the votes for Gov.

were as follows: Edward Kent 80; R. P. Dunlap 37; M. Dennett 3.

1837. The same collector as the year previous, with a small increase for his services. It was voted to receive the "Surplus Revenue" money, and S. Stacy was chosen agent to go and obtain it for the town. The question then was—What should be done with it? There were different opinions; but many, with a spirit of philanthropy, and a regard also to the best interests of the town, advocated the appropriation of it to the purchase of a farm for the residence and support of such as were, or should be, town charges. And a vote to this effect prevailed. At a meeting in April, Aaron Hubbard having offered his farm for 1800 dollars, it was voted to pay him that sum, and an agent was chosen to take the deed. At the State election in the autumn, G. Parks had 107 for Governor, and E. Kent 94.

1838. In March, H. Stevens was chosen collector of taxes, he to receive 14 dollars. An article to sell the town farm purchased the year previous was disposed of thus: In favor of selling it, 36. Against it, 61.

1839. March 11, J. Lord collector, to receive \$13,75 cents. The subject of selling the town farm was now agitated with earnestness. The vote was a close one, 95 being in favor and 100 against it. But it did not rest. It was brought up again in September, an article being inserted in the warrant to see if the town would appoint an agent to sell the farm, if it could be disposed of advantageously. It was voted to pass over the article. Mr. Fairfield had 142 votes for Gov. and Mr. Kent 113.

1840. Annual meeting March 9—L. Goding collector, he agreeing to serve for \$19,50 cents. This year was noted for great political excitement. Mr. Van Buren was candidate for re-election to the office of President of the U. S. and Mr. Harrison was the candidate of the opposition. This town had usually given a majority of Democratic votes, but this year the parties were very nearly balanced. At the election of State officers, Mr. Fairfield had 144, and Mr. Kent 142. But the same day R. W. Brackett, the Whig candidate for Representative, was elected by a majority of 3 over the Democratic candidate. At the election of Electors of President and Vice President, Nov. 2, the Democratic candidates received 142 each, and the Whig candidates the same number. It was found that the people made no choice of Governor, and in Jan. the Legislature chose Mr. Kent.

1841. Collector, Asa Brackett, for 15 dollars. The subject of selling the town farm was up again, but it was voted not to sell it. There was a case of the small pox in town in June, which excited some alarm. In Sept. Mr. Fairfield had 150 votes for Governor, and Mr. Kent 120. On a proposition to alter the Constitution so that the governor and members of the Legislature be chosen for two years, and the Legislature meet once in two years, 6 voted in favor, and 138 against. On a proposed amendment, reducing the number of Representatives to 151, the yeas were 118, nays, none.

1842. The annual meeting was held March 14, in Mr. D. T. Marsh's barn. John Lord was chosen collector, he offering to take it for \$19,75 cents. This season a Town Hall was built at an expense of \$212, exclusive of the land, which cost 5 dollars. In Sept. Mr. Fairfield, for governor, had 120 votes, E. Robinson 62, and J. Appleton 3.

1843. L. Goding collector, to serve for \$17. Early this year Gov. Fairfield was chosen U. S. Senator, and E. Kaveraugh became, by the Constitution, acting governor for the rest of the year. September, H. J. Anderson had 116 votes for governor, E. Robinson 31, and James Appleton 21.

1844. March 11, L. Goding collector for \$15. Four thousand dollars were voted for repair of highways, part of it to be reserved for winter. For town charges, 400 dollars. Sept. 9, for governor, Mr. Anderson had 118, E. Robinson 96, J. Appleton 11. On so altering the Constitution that the State Legislature should meet in May instead of January, the yeas were 202, nays none. On the proposition to establish town courts, yeas 11, nays 76. Nov. 11, the Democratic candidates for Electors of President and Vice President had 132 votes each, the Whig 102, and the Liberty 8. The Representative fell this year to Shapleigh. The contest was long, no one having a majority until the sixth meeting for the purpose, which was held Dec. 23.

1845. Annual meeting March 10, L. Goding collector for \$4,50 cents. Sept. 8, Gov. Anderson had 97 votes for re-election. F. H. Morse had 72, S. Fessenden 4, scattering 1.

1846. March 9, was the day for the annual meeting. L. Goding took the collector's office for 10 dollars. The sleighing terminated March 26, having continued 115 days, and that of the very best kind. Aug. 25, at 5 o'clock in the morning, a heavy shock of earthquake was felt. The last

in this section before was on the 23d of July, 1823. Sept. 14, for Governor, John W. Dana had 86 votes, David Brownson 71, and S. Fessenden 11. The months of Sept. and Oct. were noted for warm or moderate weather, with but little rain, and great scarcity of water.

TOWN OFFICERS.

<i>Ann'l Meet.</i>	<i>Moderators.</i>	<i>Town Clerks.</i>	<i>Treasurers.</i>
1785,	John Cook,	Joshua Brackett.	William Rodgers.
1786,	do.	do.	do.
1787,	do.	do.	do.
1788,	do.	do.	do.
1789,	Joshua Trafton,	do.	do.
1790,	John Cook,	do.	do.
1791,	do.	do.	do.
1792,	do.	do.	do.
1793,	do.	do.	Andrew Rodgers.
1794,	do.	do.	do.
1795,	do.	do.	do.
1796,	do.	do.	do.
1797,	do.	do.	do.
1798,	do.	Aaron Hubbard, Sen.	do.
1799,	Aaron Hubbard, Sen.	Joshua Brackett,	do.
1800,	John Cook,	do.	Nathan Goodwin.
1801,	do.	Andrew Rodgers,	do.
1802,	John Leighton,	do.	do.
1803,	John Cook,	Josiah P. Woodbury,	do.
1804,	John Leighton,	John Bodwell, jr.	do.
1805,	do.	do.	Josiah P. Woodbury.
1806,	do.	do.	do.
1807,	do.	do.	do.
1808,	do.	do.	do.
1809,	do.	do.	do.
1810,	do.	do.	do.
1811,	do.	do.	do.
1812,	do.	do.	do.
1813,	do.	do.	do.
1814,	do.	do.	do.
1815,	do.	do.	do.
1816,	Aaron Hubbard,	do.	Asa Merrill.
1817,	Asa Merrill,	do.	Josiah P. Woodbury.
1818,	Enoch Wood,	do.	Darling Huntress.
1819,	Samuel S. Wood,	do.	do.
1820,	John Leighton,	Wm. Trafton,	do.
1821,	do.	do.	do.
1822,	William Mann,	do.	do.
1823,	do.	do.	do.
1824,	Samuel Stacy,	do.	do.
1825,	William Mann,	do.	do.
1826,	Aaron Hubbard,	do.	do.
1827,	do.	do.	do.
1828,	do.	do.	Elisha Bodwell.
1829,	do.	do.	do.
1830,*	do.	John Bodwell,	John Brackett.
1831,	do.	do.	do.

* Shapleigh divided, and Acton incorporated March 6, 1830.

1832,	do.	Rufus W. Brackett,	do.
1833,	do.	do.	do.
1834,	Samuel S. Wood,	Aaron Hubbard,	do.
1835,	Enoch Wood,	do.	do.
1836,	do.	do.	do.
1837,	do.	Asa Brackett,	do.
1838,	John Merrill,	Aaron Hubbard,	do.
1839,	do.	do.	do.
1840,	do.	do.	do.
1841,	Nathan Merrill,	Horace Bodwell,	do.
1842,	do.	do.	do.
1843,	Daniel Waldron,	do.	do.
1844,	Mark C. Heard,	Stephen Merrill,	do.
1845,	Horace Bodwell,	do.	M. C. Dalton.
1846,	do.	do.	do.

SELECTMEN.

1785. John Cook, Simon Ricker, Joshua Brackett.
 1786. Same board re-elected.
 1787. John Cook, Joshua Trafton, Joshua Brackett,
 1788. John Cook, Joshua Brackett, Simon Ricker.
 1789. Same board re-elected.
 1790. Simon Ricker, Joshua Brackett, Nathan Goodwin.
 1791. John Cook, Nathan Coffin, Aaron Hubbard, Sen.
 1792. John Cook, Joshua Brackett, Simon Ricker.
 1793. Same board re-elected.
 1794. Joshua Brackett, John Bartlett, Nathan Goodwin.
 1795. John Cook, Joshua Brackett, John Bartlett.
 1796. John Bodwell, Sen., Jeremiah Emery, Aaron Hubbard, Sen.
 1797. Aaron Hubbard, Sen., Jeremiah Emery, John Bodwell, Sen.
 1798. Aaron Hubbard, Sen., Jeremiah Emery, Nathan Goodwin.
 1799. Same board re-elected.
 1800. Aaran Hubbard, Sen., Jeremiah Emery, Daniel Fox.
 1801. Jeremiah Emery, Nathan Goodwin, Darling Huntress.
 1802. Jer'h Emery, Nathan Goodwin, Moses Folsom.
 1803. Andrew Rodgers, Darling Huntress, Zebulon Gilman.
 1804. John Bodwell, Sen., Paul Garvin, Nathan Goodwin.
 1805. Jeremiah Emery, John Bodwell, Sen., Nathan Goodwin.
 1806. Jere'h Emery, Nathan Goodwin, John Leighton.
 1807. John Leighton, Nathan Goodwin, Moses Jellison.

1808. John Bodwell, jr., John Leighton, Moses Jellison.
 1809. Same board re-elected.
 1810. John Leighton, John Bodwell, jr., Jer'h Emery.
 1811. John Bodwell, jr. Abraham Carrol, Nathan Goodwin.
 1812. Same board re-elected.
 1813. Same board re-elected.
 1814. Same board re-elected.
 1815. Same board re-elected.
 1816. John Bodwell, John Webber, Enoch Wood.
 1817. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Samuel Heard.
 1818. Same board re-elected.
 1819. Same board re-elected.
 1820. Aaron Hubbard, Stephen Pillsbury, John Bodwell.
 1821. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Samuel Heard.
 1822. Same board re-elected.
 1823. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Stephen Pillsbury.
 1824. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Samuel Heard.
 1825. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Stephen Pillsbury.
 1826. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Aaron Hubbard.
 1827. Stephen Pillsbury, Moses Hemmenway, William Trafton.
 1828. John Bodwell, Simon Ross, Enoch Wood.
 1829. Enoch Wood, Simon Ross, Samuel S. Wood.
 1830.* John Bodwell, Joseph Dame, Sam'l S. Wood.
 1831. John Bodwell, Joseph Dame, Rufus W. Brackett.
 1832. John Bodwell, Rufus W. Brackett, Peter Young.
 1833. Same board re-elected.
 1834. John Bodwell, Rufus W. Brackett, Samuel Stacy.
 1835. Same board re-elected.
 1836. Same board re-elected.
 1837. Same board re-elected.
 1838. Rufus W. Brackett, John Hubbard, Sam'l Stacy.
 1839. Rufus W. Brackett, John Hubbard, Hubbard Stevens.
 1840. Rufus W. Brackett, John Hubbard, Sam'l Stacy.
 1841. John Bodwell, Samuel Stacy, Daniel Waldron.
 1842. Same board re-elected.
 1843. John Bodwell, Daniel Waldron, Hubbard Stevens.
 1844. John Bodwell, Hubbard Stevens, John Lord.
 1845. Hubbard Stevens, John Lord, Samuel Thompson.
 1846. Hubbard Stevens, Samuel Thompson, John Hemmenway.

* Acton set off and incorporated.

REPRESENTATIVES.

It appears from the Records that from the time the town was chartered to 1806, a period of 21 years, Representatives were chosen but two years, as will be seen below. Some years there is no record of any meeting for choosing such an officer, and several times the town voted not to choose any.

- 1788. Jeremiah Emery.
- 1802. John Leighton.
- 1806. John Leighton, Josiah P. Woodbury.
- 1807. John Leighton.
- 1808. Jeremiah Emery, John Bodwell, jr.
- 1809. Jeremiah Emery, John Leighton.
- 1810. Josiah P. Woodbury.
- 1811. John Bodwell, jr., Josiah P. Woodbury.
- 1812. Jeremiah Emery, John Bodwell.
- 1813. Jeremiah Emery, John Bodwell.
- 1814. *Voted not to choose any.*
- 1815. Josiah P. Woodbury.
- 1816. Josiah P. Woodbury.
- 1817. *Voted not to choose any.*
- 1818. " " " "
- 1819. John Bodwell.
- 1820. John Bodwell.
- 1821. *No choice effected.*
- 1822. John Bodwell.
- 1823. Enoch Wood.
- 1824. *No choice effected.*
- 1825. John Trafton.
- 1826. John Trafton.
- 1827. Aaron Hubbard.
- 1828. Aaron Hubbard.
- 1829. *No choice effected.*
- 1830. *Acton incorporated, classed with Shapleigh, and the Representative chosen lived in that place.*
- 1831. John Bodwell.
- 1832. John Brackett.
- 1833. John Brackett.
- 1834. Aaron Hubbard.
- 1835. John Brackett.
- 1836. Aaron Hubbard.
- 1837. Asa Brackett.
- 1838. Asa Brackett.

- 1839. Samuel Thompson.
- 1840. Rufus W. Brackett.
- 1841. Samuel Thompson.
- 1842.*
- 1843. Horace Bodwell.
- 1845. John Lary, jr.

* The number of Representatives in the State was reduced, this town classed with Shapleigh, and every other year after this the Representative lived in the latter place.

LITERARY HISTORY.

SCHOOL FUND.

The proprietors and early settlers had some just sense of the importance of provision being made for the education of the youth. Accordingly two school lots were reserved, one in the east, and the other in the west, part of the town. That in the part now Acton, was south of the Young neighborhood, and is owned by Mr. David Horne.

It was rented for some years, but the income was not often more than 3, 5, or 8 dollars. In 1821, agents were chosen to lease the lots 500 years. This did not put the matter to rest, and the next year an agent was chosen to lease the lot on the west 999 years, if he thought proper.

It was finally concluded to sell; and the fund now belonging to this town, arising from the sale of said lots, is 501 dollars.

MONEY RAISED.

In 1790, the town voted to raise 40 pounds for schools. The next year 50 pounds were voted, and the town divided into two classes for schools. From that year to 1802, the sum was generally 60 pounds yearly. One of the first school houses stood nearly opposite of that in the Brackett Class, (No. 2.) It had no chimney of brick. The large fire place was of stone, and the smoke was conducted out through a sort of chimney made of boards.

From 1806 to 1814, the school tax was usually 600 dollars. After that, it was often 700 dollars. From 1822 to the division of the town in 1830, from 1000 to 1076 dollars were raised yearly. There were then 21 classes or districts. Since Acton was incorporated, the whole sum appropriated for schools, including that which is from the State, arising from tax on Banks, and the school fund in the town, has been from 514 to nearly 700 dollars annually. The number of classes is 12, and the number of scholars between 4 and 21 years of age, 517.

SUPERINTENDING COMMITTEE.

After 1820, it was customary to choose a Superintending Committee to visit the schools. But some thought such a Committee of no use, and were much opposed to paying them. In 1827 however, it was voted, after they were chosen that they be required to faithfully attend to their duty, and that they be allowed *twenty-five cents* a day for their services. At another town meeting soon after, that vote was reconsidered, and it was voted that their accounts be allowed out of the school money in the districts they visited, and that they visit only where requested. The friends of education and of well regulated schools persevered notwithstanding such embarrassments, and something was done about every year for the improvement of the schools until 1835, when there was another outbreak against paying this Committee, judged by many so useless. It was voted at the annual meeting in March, that "the Committee should not receive any pay from the town." June 1, "Voted not to allow the accounts of the S. Committee for the three last years." In 1836, the Committee chosen refused to serve. The town then chose three Mr. Young's, but they refused; and in April it was voted that 15 dollars of the interest of the School Fund be paid to the Committee. Also, that the Selectmen settle with the former Committees as they best could. The matter has gone on quietly since. The following have served on this Committee in the years named.

- 1820. W. Stevens, R. Buck, W. Trafton.
- 1821. J. Bodwell, S. Ross, S. Heard.
- 1822. The same.
- 1823. R. Buck, W. Trafton, E. Bodwell.
- 1824. The same.
- 1825. C. Blanchard, R. Buck, W. Trafton.
- 1826. R. Buck, W. Trafton, E. Bodwell.
- 1827. R. Buck, E. Bodwell, G. Webber.

- 1828. R. Buck, J. Bodwell, G. Webber.
- 1829. W. Trafton, E. Bodwell, C. Emerson.
- 1830. C. Parker, C. Emerson, R. W. Brackett.
- 1831. The same.
- 1832. R. Buck, C. Emerson, S. C. Adams.
- 1833. The same.
- 1834. The same.
- 1835. S. S. Wood, R. W. Brackett, H. Stevens.
- 1836. The same.
- 1837. R. W. Brackett, H. Stevens, Peter Young.
- 1838. R. W. Brackett, H. Stevens, T. D. Marsh.
- 1839. R. W. Brackett, H. Stevens, H. Bodwell.
- 1840. T. Jameson, T. D. Marsh, H. Bodwell.
- 1841. The same.
- 1842. T. Jameson, H. Bodwell, W. N. Guptill.
- 1843. H. Bodwell, W. N. Guptill,* T. D. Marsh.*
- 1844. J. Fullonton, C. Parker, T. Jameson.
- 1845. J. Fullonton, C. Parker, N. G. Littlefield.
- 1846. J. Fullonton, R. W. Brackett, J. Hemmenway.

COLLEGE GRADUATES.

Mr. Jonathan Young, a native of Barrington, N. H. graduated at Harvard College in 1798,—settled here in 1800. He followed the farming business, and died Oct. 19, 1838, aged 65.

Mr. Charles Dame, born here, graduated at Bowdoin College in 1835, then pursued a regular course at Andover Theological Seminary, where he graduated in 1838. May 29, 1839, he was settled pastor over the First Congregational church in Falmouth, where he continues.

Joshua Moody Young, a native of the town, served at the art of printing at Portland—was afterward editor of the Saco Democrat, then prepared for College, and graduated at Mount St. Mary's, in Maryland. He is now a Catholic Priest in Lancaster, Ohio.

Jonathan Edmund Young, a native, graduated at Mount St. Mary's College, June, 1845, and is now studying Theology at the same institution.

Joseph Stacy, a native also, was in Waterville College three years, but left without graduating. He is now a Geologist in the service of a mining company near Lake Superior.

* Dr. Guptill left town. Mr. Marsh died, and T. Jameson and E. Ricker were appointed to fill the vacancies.

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

FIRST FREE-WILL BAPTIST CHURCH.

In the year 1780, five years before the town was incorporated, the settlers were visited by Eld. Toser Lord, a native of Berwick. He had been ordained a Baptist minister at Lebanon in 1776, but in 1779 he left the Baptists and united with Eld. Benj. Randall, founder of the F. W. Baptist denomination, in preaching a general atonement, free in its provisions for all who would accept. The meetings in this place were held for some time in an unfinished dwelling not far from where Mr. John Lary now resides. A great reformation took place, a number were baptized and organized into a church. Eld. Lord moved into town. This church prospered for a while and then declined until its visibility was gone, and Eld. L. moved away.

The next effort was in 1801. Eld. Gershom Lord moved from Lebanon into this place and lived in a house near where Dea. Samuel Runnels now resides. A church of eight members was formed, which in the three following years increased to 40. In process of time Eld. Lord went to the more easterly parts of the state, where he died. In 1807 Humphrey Goodwin, who then resided here was ordained. He continued with this church until 1814, when he moved to Hollis. After this Eld. David Blaisdell of Lebanon supplied a part of the time for some 15 years. Large accessions were made in 1815. In 1818 a house of worship was erected which stood opposite of the place occupied by the house in which the church now worships. About 1834, Theodore Stevens a native of Limington commenced preaching with this church. The next year he was ordained at Limington. He preached some until 1836, and left. In 1839 he returned and continued 3 years, during which more than 50 united with the church. In 1843, Eld. J. Fullonton, a native of Raymond, N. H. took charge. In Sept. last his vocal organs having failed, Eld. Horace Stanton, a native of Lebanon, was engaged to supply. Those who became preachers in this church besides those already named are Paul Reynolds, who afterwards united with the Christian Connection, Lewis Hanson Witham, a native of Milton, N. H., ordained at Hollis, Sept. 13, 1839, and John Runnels, ordained in this town Nov. 1842.

The clerks have been Gershom Lord, Levi Merrill, Ralph Farnham, Asa Merrill, Nathan Merrill, Paul Reynolds, John Farnham, and *R. W. Brackett*.

The deacons, B. Miller, who moved to Exeter, Me., *Samuel Runnels* and *Job Ricker*.

A branch of this church in Wakefield was set off into a church in 1831, and another was formed into the church known as the Second F. W. B. church in Acton, in 1843.

The present meeting house was erected in 1840, and dedicated Oct. 8, the sermon being preached by Eld. Silas Curtis.

BAPTIST CHURCH.

There were several persons of Baptist sentiments here in 1780, and in 1781, a church was constituted. The first preacher was Eld. Nehemiah Davis. He lived in the West Parish (now Acton,) a few years, and then in the East Parish until 1798 when he moved to Ohio. In 1802, this church erected its first meeting house. It stood very near where the house of worship now occupied stands, and cost 1500 dollars. Several of the members lived east of the pond, and in 1803 they were set off and organized into a church by themselves. There were some supplies of preaching until 1807, when Eld. William Goding, a native of Watertown, Ms., who had been a member of the church at Livermore, Me., and had received ordination and preached with the church in Wayne about 4 years, came to this place and took charge of this branch of Zion. He continued his labors until 1827, a period of 20 years. In 1812, the number of members was 90. In 1815 and 16, there was a good revival, and 40 were added on a profession of their faith.

In 1827, the state of things was somewhat confused and trying. After due consideration it was judged advisable to have a new organization. This was effected Jan. 4, 1828, 28 members uniting. Eld. Wm. Glover then preached a few months with success. Several new members joined, and the more part of the old members united also. July 27, 1828, Mr. Charles Emerson was ordained pastor of this people. Eld. E. preached 6 years, and in that time about 100 were added. He was succeeded in Sept. 1837, by Eld. Thomas Jameson, a native of Cushing, Me., who continued 7 years, closing his labors in the latter part of 1844, and moving from town soon after. About 50 were added during his ministry, and a new meeting house erected which was completed in 1841. The next minister was Eld. Nathaniel G. Littlefield, a native of Lyman, who took charge in the Summer of 1845, and is now with the church.

The Clerks have been John Bodwell, Sen., John Bodwell, Samuel Heard, Enoch Wood, and *Mark C. Heard*.

The Deacons have been John Bodwell, Sen., Aaron Hubbard, Sen., John Lary, Nathan Brackett, Enoch Wood, John Bodwell, *Samuel Stacy* and *Benjamin Brackett*.

A branch of this body at Milton Mills, was constituted a separate church in 1835.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

It has been seen that two churches were formed by 1781, four years previous to the incorporation of the town; but the growing population, and especially the different sentiments that prevailed, rendered it expedient for another. Accordingly on the 18th of Sept., 1781, Mr. Alpheus Spring, pastor of the 2d church in Kittery (now Elliot) with a Dea. Edmund Coffin met the friends in the place and organized a church of 15 members. No pastor was settled for several years, and probably the church had but little preaching. The following are some of the votes of the town passed at different times relative to ecclesiastical affairs.

March 30, 1789, on an article to see if the town would raise money for the support of the gospel, passed in the negative.

Sept. 14, Voted to raise 60 pounds for the support of the gospel to be paid into the Treasury, each religious society to draw out in proportion to the male hearers in attendance of such societies.

Sept. 26, 1791, on an article to see if the town would settle a gospel minister, passed in the negative.

May 17, 1792, Voted that the Constables should not collect the money for the support of the gospel, and the lists be taken out of their hands, to be kept until called for, and then given to some Constable to collect.

About 1794, a meeting house was built, being the first erected in the town. It stood on the Parsonage land near where Mr. Levi Brackett now lives, on the north side of the road. In January, 1796, this church settled Mr. Joseph Brown as pastor. He was to have 40 pounds yearly for 4 years and after that 50 pounds. He was ordained in the meeting house. He lived in the house now occupied by Mr. Stephen Merrill, which was erected for him. In 1802 and '03, there were some additions. Mr. Brown preached 8 years, and in 1804 left. After this there were some supplies until April, 1823, when Mr. Henry A. Merrill, a native of Conway, N. H., was engaged. He continued about a year, leaving in 1824. The next minister was Mr. Clement Parker, a native of Coventry, Ct., who had been settled in Chester, N. H. He was installed over this church Jan. 28, 1829,

on which occasion Mr. Elisha Bacon of Sanford preached. In 1831, several additions were made to the church. Nov. 9, of that year, Mr. Parker was dismissed. April 9, 1834, Mr. Martyn Cushman, a native of Kingston, Ms., was ordained. Mr. Weston of Lebanon, preached the sermon. He was dismissed in 1836, and in June, 1838, Mr. Parker returned and was settled over the church again, and he continued 8 years, closing his labors in June last. The church is now destitute of a pastor. The present meeting house was built in 1827. Mr. Charles Dame, a native of this place is now settled in the ministry at Falmouth.

The Clerks have been, Aaron Hubbard, Sen., Daniel Wood, James Sanborn, and *Isaiah Boston*.

The Deacons have been Samuel Willey, John Rowe, Samuel Sanborn, Mark Buzzell, *James Hubbard*, *Joseph Remick*, and *Jesse W. Sanborn*.

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

There were a few persons of Methodist sentiments in town previous to 1826. In that year a church was gathered according to Disciplinary usages by Eld. Wm. McKoy. The first regular preaching on the Sabbath commenced in 1837. The meetings were held mostly in school houses until 1840, when a convenient meeting house was erected. The following ministers have supplied this church with preaching;—1837, Henry L. Linscott. '38, Richard H. Ford. '39 and '40, B. F. Foster. '41, Jesse Stone. '42, James Rice. '43, James Harrington. '44 and '45, A. P. Sanborn. '46, Henry L. Linscott. Some portion of the time the preachers that have labored here have supplied a part of the time at Newfield.

SECOND FREE-WILL BAPTIST CHURCH.

This is the last church that has been formed in the town. Several of the members were formerly connected with the First Church. A meeting house was built in 1840. A society was formed called, The Union Society of Acton. In the fore part of 1843, there was a revival interest and several added. The church was organized in the autumn of that year. Eld. John Brooks of Wakefield, N. H., preached a portion of the time from Oct. 1841, to the Spring of 1845. Since then Eld. Joseph Spinney of Wakefield, has preached a part of the time, and others have supplied occasionally.

Mr. Hubbard Stevens is Clerk.

The Deacons are *Joseph Hilton* and *Hubbard Stevens*.

PARSONAGE LAND.

A lot of land amounting to 300 acres was reserved by the original proprietors for a parsonage. It was the land which

now constitutes much of the farm of Mr. Stephen Merrill and others to the east of it on the north side of the road.

In 1823 measures were taken to sell it. Nov. 3, the town voted that it would not make any objection to the Legislature against giving the first Parish leave to sell the Parsonage lot. It was sold soon after, and in 1843, a division of the fund was made among the several Societies.

STATISTICS OF CHURCHES.

<i>Churches.</i>	<i>No. Mem.</i>	<i>Cost M.</i>	<i>Houses.</i>	<i>Min. F^{ds.}</i>
First F. W. Baptist,	115	\$ 1200		\$ 599,93
Baptist,	104	850		1091,22
Congregational,	86	1000		528,41
Methodist,	51	650		424,08
Second F. W. Baptist,	27	700		247,49
	383	\$ 4400		\$ 2891,13

PROFESSIONAL MEN.

PHYSICIANS.

The first Physician that settled in town was Dr. Charles Powers, who commenced about the year 1791. For many years he did a good business. He continued until about 1825, but practiced occasionally in town afterwards.

Dr. Benjamin Mace lived at Emery's Mills near what is now the easterly part of this town some two years or more, about 1803 and 1804. He moved to New Gloucester.

Dr. Whiting Stevens a native of Winthrop came to that neighborhood in 1807, where he still continues. The most of his practice has been in Shapleigh, but some in Acton.

The next in what is now Acton after Dr. Powers was Dr. Reuben Buck, a native of Wilmington, Ms., who received his diploma at Harvard Medical College. He commenced here in 1819, has had an extensive practice in which he is still successfully engaged.

Dr. James Emery, a native of Shapleigh, lived in town for a time, but soon after completing his studies moved away. He now lives in Frankfort.

Dr. Jonathan S. Calef a native of Lyman, studied with Dr. Buck, practiced here about two years and in 1843, moved to Manchester, N. H.

Dr. Wm. N. Guptill was in town about two years and left in 1843.

Dr. Jeremiah Crosby Buck, a native of this town, graduated at Dartmouth Med. Coll. in 1843, and soon commenced practice here, in which he is still engaged.

Dr. Charles Harvey Rowell, a native of Lyndon, Vt., graduated at Dart. Med. Coll. in 1845, and in Nov. commenced in this place.

Dr. Charles Powers Hubbard, now living in Passadonkeag, and Dr. Horace Stacy, living in Boston, were natives of this town. Also, Richard Russell Ricker, who has nearly completed his medical studies.

LAWYERS.

But one Lawyer has been engaged in the practice in this town. This was Jonathan Clark, Esq., who practiced a short time at "The Corner," previous to 1818.

Mr. Calvin Rogers Hubbard, son of Maj. A. Hubbard of this town, after suitable preparatory studies, read law under the instruction of N. D. Appleton, Esq. of Alfred, and practiced some two years at Springvale village in Sanford, where he died in 1837.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

MINISTERS.

Tozier Lord, was born in Berwick. He was married in Lebanon in 1765 or '66. In that town he resided some years and taught school. In 1776, he was ordained a Baptist minister. In 1779, he separated himself from the Baptists, and soon united with Eld. Benj. Randall in preaching a general atonement. He then lived in Barrington, N. H. Soon after he moved to this town and resided near where Dea. S. Stacy now lives. There he planted an orchard which is yet standing. Afterwards he lived near what is now Acton Corner. About the year 1800, he moved away, and after preaching in several places, in 1825 and '26, preached to the Baptist church in Athens. Soon after this he died.

Gershom Lord, a native of Dover, N. H. lived in Lebanon some years, where he was ordained by Eld. Randall, Nov. 21, 1799, and about 1801, moved to this place. In 1803, he moved to the lower part of the State. It was supposed that he was drowned in the Penobscot river in attempting to cross on a boom, but his body was never found.

Humphrey Goodwin, was a native of Berwick, and was

ordained here in 1807, on which occasion Eld. H. D. Buzzell preached. In 1814, he left this town and went to Hollis, where he resided until his death, which took place some time after 1836.

Josiah Magoon, an early settler, was a native of Kingston, N. H. He served in the war from 1776, about two years, and after that moved here. He was the first constable and collector after the town was chartered. In this place he made a public profession of religion, and commenced preaching. In 1793, he moved to New Hampton, N. H., where in 1802 he was ordained over the F. W. Baptist church. He was an acceptable and useful preacher. He died in that town Feb. 5, 1841, aged 82.

Paul Reynolds was born in this place in 1790. After preaching awhile, July 17, 1829, he was ordained at Lebanon by a council of ministers of the Christian connection, with which people he was connected. He died here Aug. 2, 1842, aged 52. He had ten children.

Asa Merrill was born in Raymond, N. H. When he was but a few months old, his parents came here. He was moderator of town meeting in 1817, and also served as town Treasurer the same year. He improved as a preacher a few years, but was not ordained. He died Oct. 10, 1820, aged 42.

PHYSICIANS.

Dr. Charles Powers, the first Physician of this town, was a native of Greenwich, Ms. He came here in 1791, and practiced most of the time more than 30 years. He died at Shapleigh, early in 1844, aged 81.

LAWYERS.

Jonathan Clark, a native of Berwick, lived here a few years not far from 1815. His office was a small building which may be seen a little westerly of Esq. H. Bodwell's store. After leaving this town he lived in Sanford. His wife died,—he was destitute of property, and in despondency he terminated by suicide the life which to him he considered burdensome.

Calvin Rogers Hubbard was born here Feb. 9, 1808. After attending the Academy at Limerick, and also at South Berwick, he attended Philip's Academy at Exeter, N. H. about two years. He then studied law at Alfred, and opened an office at Sanford. His wife was Miss Martha Thurston, daughter of Mr. James Thurston, a Congregational minister, who resided at Exeter. In the midst of life and bright prospects of success, Mr. H. was arrested by a violent fever, of which he died Nov. 17, 1837, aged 29 years. He was buried in Acton.

EARLY TOWN OFFICERS.

John Cook lived in early life in Dover, N. H. and was probably born there. He moved from Rochester, N. H. to this town in 1781. He was moderator of the annual town meeting 16 years, and one of the Selectmen 9 years. He died some time after 1803, more than 80 years of age.

Joshua Brackett, a native of Berwick, was an early settler here, commencing on the place now the Baptist Parsonage in 1778. He was the first Town Clerk, which office he filled 15 years. He was a member of the first board of Selectmen, and served in all, 10 years. He had Job's number of children, seven sons and 3 daughters, and died Jan. 3, 1822, aged 93.

Zebulon Gilman, a native of Exeter, N. H., came into town at the age of 17. He was one of the Selectmen in 1803. He moved to New Durham, N. H. about 1816, and died there in 1841, aged 77.

Nathan Goodwin, a native of Berwick, came here before the town was incorporated, was town Treasurer 5 years, and one of the Selectmen 15. He had 10 children, and died in Dec. 1831, aged about 85.

Wm. Rogers was born in Ireland, came to this country in early life, settled in that part of Berwick now S. Berwick, and was a merchant. He moved here before the town was chartered, and was, it is said, the first Justice of the Peace. He was the first town Treasurer, and served 7 years. He died previous to 1820.

Andrew Rogers, son of the above, was born in Berwick. He was Town Clerk 2 years, town Treasurer 7, and Selectman one. He left this town, suffered in consequence of being surety, and for some time was in the jail at Exeter, N. H. for debt. After this he lived in Augusta, where he died after 1831.

John Bodwell, born in Methuen, Ms. settled in this place in 1786. He was an early Deacon in the Baptist church, also Clerk of the same, and one of the Selectmen four years. He died Nov. 19, 1811, aged 59.

Aaron Hubbard born in the part of Berwick now S. Berwick, came here about 1781. He was the first Clerk of the Congregational church, afterwards joined the Baptist church, of which he was a Deacon. He was moderator of the annual town meeting one year, Town Clerk one, and one of the Selectmen 6 years. He had nine children, and died March 1, 1814, aged 61.

Josiah Perkins Woodbury born in Salem, Ms., traded in Newfield a time, and then settled at what is now Acton Corner, where he was engaged in trade. He was a Justice of the

Peace, Town Clerk one year, Treasurer 13, and Representative in the State Legislature 5. He had but 1 child, now the wife of Mr. E. B. Remick. He died Oct. 1, 1819, aged 46.

Daniel Fox was born in Nottingham, N. H., settled here from Lee in 1783. He was one of the Selectmen in 1800. He had 12 children, and died Aug. 28, 1824, aged 72.

Moses Hemenway born in Arundel, now Kennebunk, was a descendant of Mr. Moses Hemenway, for more than 50 years minister of a church in Wells. Mr. H. was elected Selectman in 1827, but died before the close of the year, aged 29. He had 4 children.

Daniel Waldron, born in Barrington, N. H., lived in this town the few last years of his life, was moderator of town meeting one year, was chosen Selectman three years, but died in 1843, while holding that office.

Thomas Drew Marsh, a native of the town, was a successful teacher of common schools, and of sacred music. He was chosen one of the Superintending School Committee 4 years, and died while holding that office, Aug. 13, 1843, aged 32.

It was designed to confine these accounts to such as have deceased, but notices of two or three worthy citizens of the town may be appropriate.

Elder William Goding, a native of Watertown, Ms., has been an ordained minister 44 years, has lived in this town 39, and was pastor of the Baptist church about 20. He supplied some after that, until he became superannuated. He still lives at the age of 85 years. His snow white head and feeble frame, indicate that he will soon be gathered to the fathers, and it is trusted in peace.

Jeremiah Emery, Esq. a native of Berwick, came here when young. He has been one of the Selectmen 10 years and a Representative 5, and rendered the town other important services. He is now 91 years of age.

John Bodwell, Esq. a native of Methuen, Ms. has resided here 60 years. He has filled the office of Town Clerk 18 years, Representative 8, and served as one of the Selectmen 32. Few towns have books kept with such care, neatness, and precision, as those kept by Esq. B. while Town Clerk and Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. His age is about 70.

CASUALTIES.

The following is probably not a full account, but in the absence of any bill of mortality, or any record, it embraces all that could well be collected.

Jacob Emery was drowned while bathing at Emery's Mills about the year 1775. His age was about 16. Wm. Rog-

ers was suffocated while attempting to arrest a fire in the woods. The date cannot be given but it was probably before the year 1800. His age was between 18 and 20.

Alexander Thompson and Samuel Thompson, brothers, were drowned in attempting to cross a pond on the ice about 1817. The first was twenty-one and the other not far from eighteen years of age.

Timothy Remick died instantly while on his way to Great Falls, in the Summer of 1829. He was about 70.

Hamilton E. son of Maj. A. Hubbard, and Sarah, daughter of Mr. Dearborn Brackett, each about 3 years of age, were drowned in a mill pond, Sept. 21, 1833.

Sarah Sanborn was arrested by death while riding from Wakefield to her home in this town, Sept. 22, 1837. Her age was 70.

Benjamin Sanborn was found dead in a pasture near Mr. Zebulon Gilman's in Nov. 1837. He was between 50 and 60 years of age.

Nathaniel Ricker was drowned while attempting to cross the pond at Horn's mills, in Feb. 1838.

Daniel Horn, Jr. died while travelling the road towards his home, in the winter of 1838, aged 33.

Joseph Remick, Jr. was drowned while bathing in Great East pond in June, 1840, aged 17.

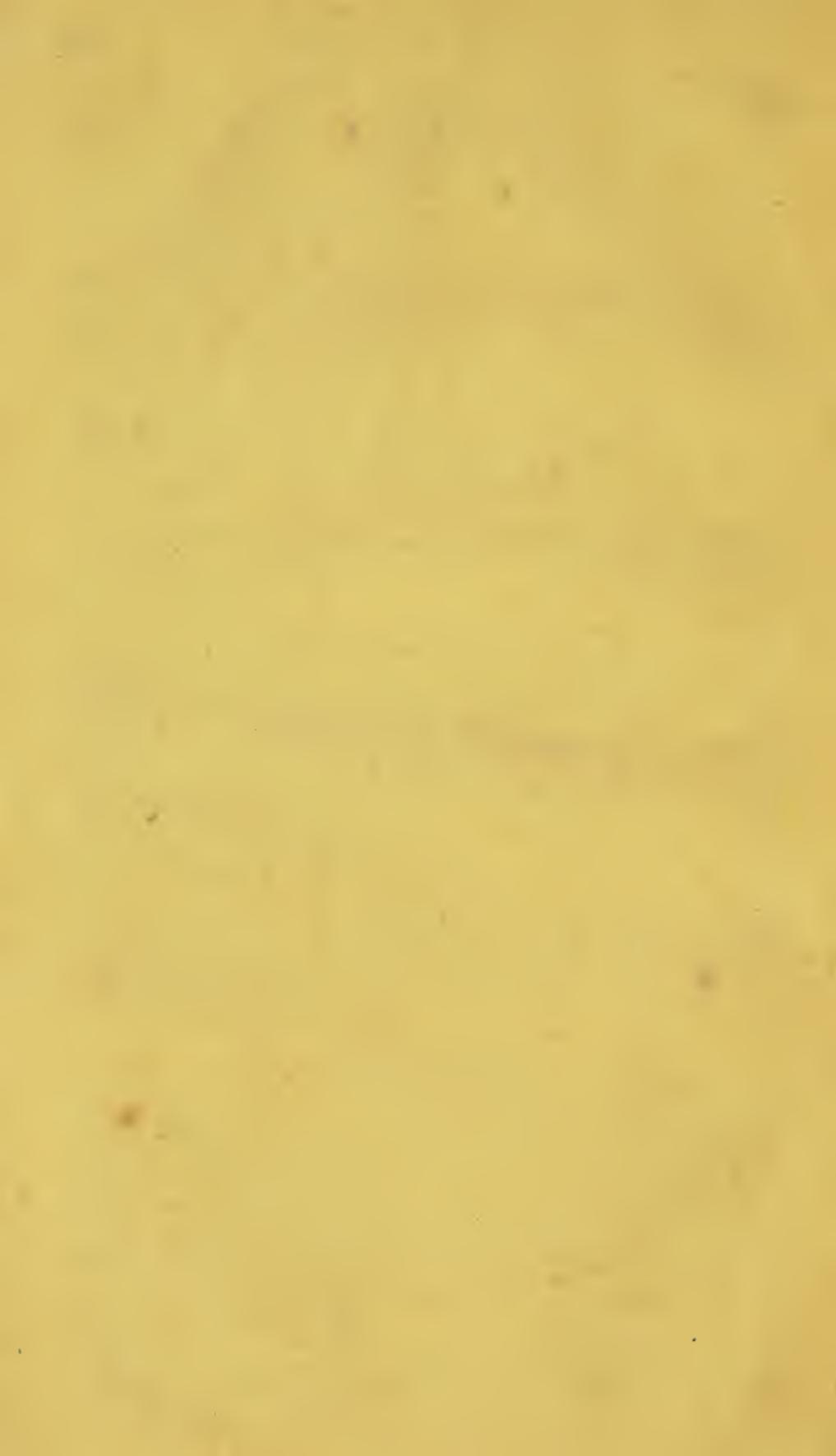
Benjamin Titcomb was taken apparently faint while at work in the woods, Dec. 29, 1842, and in ten minutes he was still in death. His age was 66.

POPULATION. The population in 1830 was 1398. There were then 40 more females than males. By the census of 1840, it appeared that the number of inhabitants was 1401, being a gain of but three in ten years.

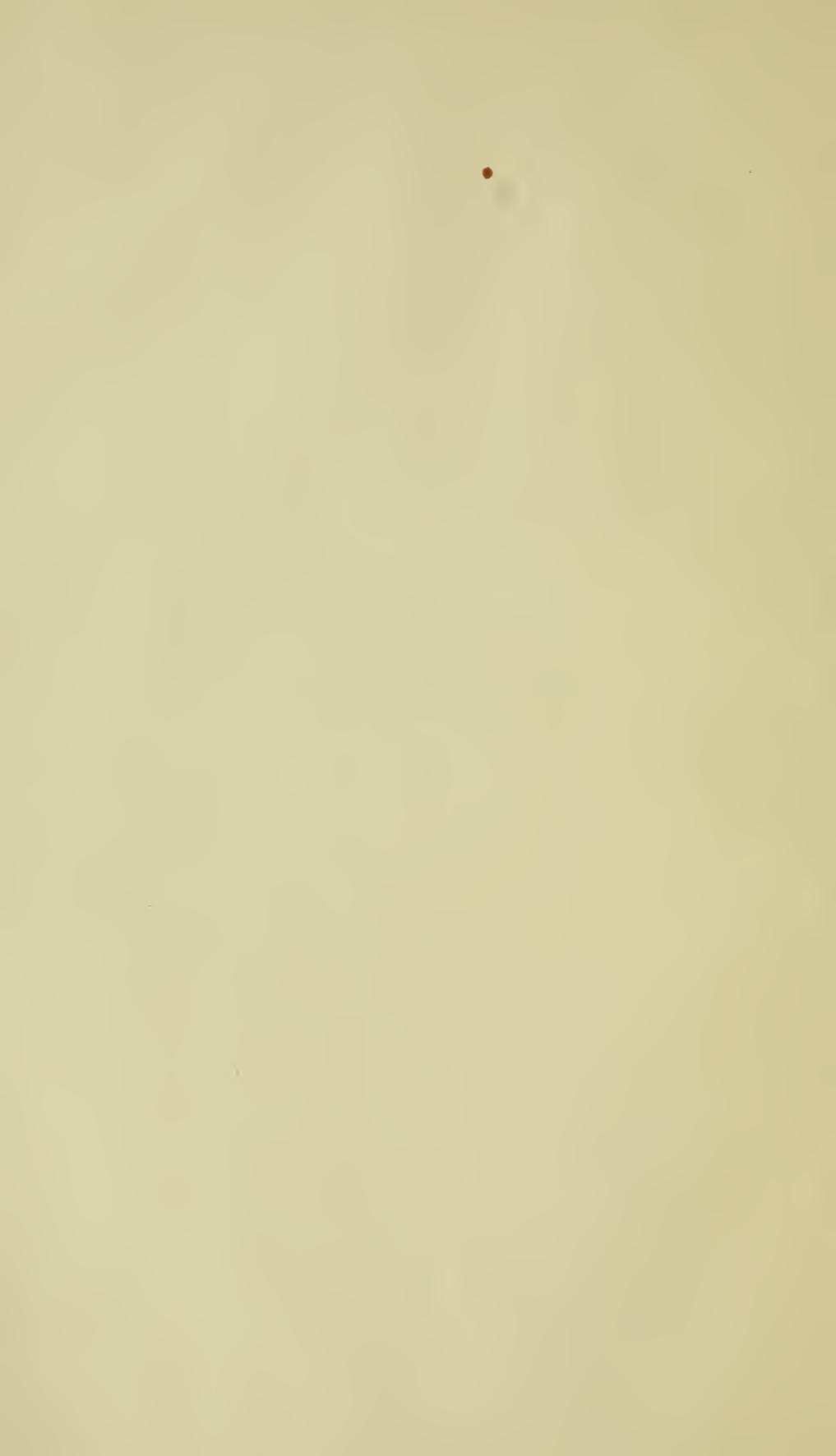
CONCLUSION.

The events of 70 years, the period since the settlements began, have now been given. Thirty years more will complete a century. Then the inhabitants may have a centennial celebration. Great changes for the better, will, without doubt, take place by that time, the march of improvement being onward, and the Most High having given assurance in the Holy Scriptures that the kingdom of the Savior shall be extended through universal empire, while ignorance and error shall fall. Let those that now live do what they can for the happiness of posterity, and their race, and great will be their reward.

ERRATA. On page 5, the distance of the town from Boston is said to be 100 miles. This was taken from the U. S. Gazetteer, but is incorrect. It is about 85.







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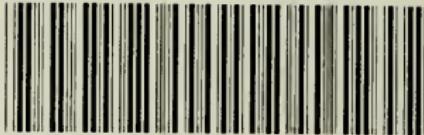
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